

Public Law 102-209  
102d Congress

Joint Resolution

Designating December 1991 as "Bicentennial of the District of Columbia Month".

Dec. 10, 1991  
[H.J. Res. 356]

Whereas the year 1991 is recognized as the 200th anniversary of the District of Columbia because many of the events important to the founding of the Nation's Capital occurred during that year;

Whereas on January 24, 1791, George Washington selected the site along the Potomac River as the district for the permanent seat of the Government of the United States where the vision of the infant nation dedicated to the principles of self-government could be realized;

Whereas in February 1791, Andrew Ellicott and Benjamin Banneker began to survey the new district, which would become the center of a continent and leader of the free world;

Whereas on September 9, 1791, the Commissioners charged with the founding of the city informed Major Pierre L'Enfant that the Federal district was to be called the Territory of Columbia and the Federal city the City of Washington;

Whereas on December 13, 1791, L'Enfant's grand plan for the development of the Nation's Capital, which included magnificent vistas, radiating avenues, beautiful parks and promenades, cascading fountains, and public spaces for national monuments, and which reflected the patriotic enthusiasm that the Federal city forever serve as a temple to liberty, was submitted to the Congress;

Whereas on December 19, 1791, the State of Maryland forever ceded and relinquished to the Congress and the Government of the United States the final land grant to form the new district;

Whereas the creation of the District of Columbia was an important act of self-government by the first Federal Congress designed to strengthen and preserve the political institutions of a free people, and the District itself is a time-honored symbol of the Republic;

Whereas the grandeur and beauty of the District of Columbia are acclaimed throughout the world;

Whereas the sacrifices of a people dedicated to freedom are forever remembered in the inspiring memorials located in the District of Columbia;

Whereas the people of the District of Columbia have made contributions to the arts, law, music, and culture that have been recognized throughout the Nation and the world;

Whereas the District of Columbia is a national treasure as the repository of much of our Nation's history; and

Whereas the District of Columbia is truly where the people of the United States, through our elected representatives, exercise the right of self-governance: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That December 1991 is designated as "Bicentennial of the District of Columbia*

Month", and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation—

(1) honoring the 200th anniversary of the founding of the District of Columbia as the Nation's Capital; and

(2) calling upon the people of the United States to observe such month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Approved December 10, 1991.

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**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 356:**

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 137 (1991):

Nov. 26, considered and passed House.

Nov. 27, considered and passed Senate.